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SPECIAL ANALYSES

POLAND: Review of Warsaw Pact Readiness

Moscow has achieved a military posture with forces around Poland that probably can be sustained for many weeks. This will permit the Soviets to react to events in Poland with considerable speed and flexibility.

The Soviets may have been planning to intervene in Poland by mid-December, under the guise of combined exercises. The timetable apparently was deferred, perhaps shortly before the Warsaw Pact summit meeting on 5 December.

Some reporting attributes the delay to a Soviet decision, announced at the summit meeting in Moscow, to give Polish leader Kania more time to establish control over political developments in Poland.

Preparations Not Complete

Some intervention preparations continued to take place after the meeting on 5 December.

The weight of the evidence indicates, however, that preparations for movement into Poland probably were not completed by 8 December. Since 16 December, we can determine that most of the divisions probably have not yet reached a high state of readiness.

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Furthermore, the Soviets have brought some of their divisions in the western USSR along the Polish border to a high state of readiness. Three normally low-strength divisions--one from the Baltic Military District and two from the Carpathian Military District--have been augmented by a callup of reservists and civilian trucks. (TSR)

Limited or Major Intervention

The Soviets probably have sufficient ground forces prepared to conduct a limited intervention within about 24 to 48 hours. Several ground force divisions from the western USSR could be used, along with the two Soviet divisions now in Poland, perhaps one or two Czechoslovak divisions, and one Soviet division from Czechoslovakia. The Soviets might also call on some of their divisions in East Germany, which are routinely at higher readiness than forces in the western USSR. [REDACTED]

With about three to five days of additional preparation, a major intervention force on the order of 15 to 25 Pact divisions could be readied for use in Poland.

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The Soviets presumably hope that Polish military leaders and some political leaders would cooperate with them--or at least acquiesce in the entry of Soviet forces into Poland. Even if Polish political and military leaders did decide to cooperate, however, they would be taking a risk. Some members of the Polish military forces and the general population would consider the entry of Soviet forces a provocation, and resistance--perhaps of major dimensions--could result.

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